iv) display of allocation of foodgrains - district and FPS wise on websites for public scrutiny.

C. to use ICT tools such as -

i) computerisation of TPDS Operations;

ii) pilot scheme on Smart Card based Operations in Haryana and Chandigarh;

iii) piloting of new technologies for tracking movement of vehicles transporting TPDS Commodities, and

D. to improve efficiency of FPS operations through-

i) doorstep delivery of foodgrains;

ii) ensuring timely availability of foodgrains;

iii) distribution of wheat flour/fortified wheat flour under TPDS;

iv) allotment of Fair Price Shops to Institutions and Groups;

v) sale of non-PDS items by FPS licensees, and

vi) revision of commission to FPS licensees.

**Price-rise of sugar**

178. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to stale:

(a) whether Government has amended the Essential Commodities Act (ECA) through an Ordinance providing for fixing the levy price of sugar at a fair and remunerative price;

(b) whether Government would use ECA to double PDS quota if sugar talks hit a deadlock;

(c) whether there is great pressure on Government to import sugar as soaring global prices and acute domestic supply pose problems for Government;

(d) whether rising sugar prices has caused problem for Government; and

(e) if so, the concrete steps and measures Government proposes to take in addition to Ordinance to improve sugar supply and also check price of sugar in country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) The Central Government has amended the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 through an Ordinance, *inter alia*, for determining the levy price of sugar starting from the sugar season 2009-10 by taking into account the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane payable by sugar factories.

(b) There is no proposal to double the PDS quota of sugar. However, the Central Government has raised the levy sugar obligation of domestic producers of sugar from earlier 10% to 20% in respect of sugar produced in the current sugar season 2009-10 *vide* notification dated 7th October, 2009.

(c) The Central Government is concerned as the estimated sugar production in the current sugar season 2009-10 is expected to be substantially lower than the overall consumption requirement of sugar in the country. In order to meet the demand-supply mismatch, the Central Government has allowed import of white/refined and raw sugar at zero duty to overcome the shortage. However, there is no proposal to import sugar on Government account.

(d) and (e) The Central Government is concerned with rise in sugar prices and has taken a slew of measures to augment availability as well as to moderate prices of sugar in the open market is given in the enclosed Statement. [Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to USQ No. 174 part (c)]

**Storage infrastructure of FCI**

179. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the storage infrastructure for wheat, rice, etc., procured annually by FCI, are adequate and safeguards are adopted by them to avoid wastage during storage;

(b) the total storage capacity of FCI, State-wise;

(c) whether new storage capacity are being created to take care of procurement of cereals by State Governments, if they approach FCI, in this regard; and

(d) whether North-East States have storage capacity for the wheat, rice, etc. to maintain buffer stock as per norms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) As on 30.10.2009, FCI is having 278.59 lakh MTs of storage capacity and the total stocks held are 214.46 lakh MTs. If wheat procurement in RMS 2010-11 follows the trend of procurement in RMS 2009-10, the present storage capacity may not be adequate to store wheat stocks. To avoid wastage during storage, the stocks are stored in scientifically constructed godowns/plinths and they are chemically treated periodically.

(b) The State-wise storage capacity available with FCI as on 31-10-09 is given in the enclosed Statement. *(See* below).

(c) The State Governments of DCP States have to create storage capacity on their own to meet their annual TPDS/CWS requirements. In the non-DCP States new storage capacity is proposed to be created by FCI for wheat & rice.

(d) As on 30-10-2009, FCI in North East Zone is having a total storage capacity of 4.43 lakh MTs as against average offtake of 2.1 lakh MTs per month. As per the present norms, each State should have a storage capacity of 4 months offtake which includes two months of buffer stocks, one month of strategic reserves and one month of operational stocks. Based on the above formula, the total requirement in North East Zone is 11.78 lakh MTs (at 75% Utilization). Thus the storage gap comes to 7.35 lakh MTs.

To bridge the gap, in the 11th Five Year Plan the Planning Commission has approved Rs.24 crores, as Grants-in Aid to be given to the North Eastern States, Sikkim and Jammu & Kashmir for construction of storage godowns.